

But the proofs are too strong for us. The straiter Darwinists would have us believe that the variations which have brought about this marvellous development have been guided by no directing impulse. have not even been stimulated by environment or experience, but are spontaneous random fluctuations which, when useful, have been preserved by the struggle for life. This theory is non-proven, and we may disbelieve it if we please. But as a process, and without implication as to causes, evolution holds the ground as an explanation of the origin of man, and of the animals that are below him. We must remember that, from the physical point of view, the gulf between man and the monkey is after all not so wide as that between the monkey and the squirrel.

Great as is the contrast between man and the brutes, more striking still is man's inconsistency with his natural surroundings. He has grown up in a world that is unmoral, wasteful, and cruel—a world in which life feeds upon life, in which myriads are born without chance of survival, in which justice and mercy are trampled down by the fierceness of the struggle for existence. He has taken some colour from his surroundings: he has learnt his lesson in cruelty and selfishness—namely, in some respects he seems more bloodthirsty than the brutes, for of them few kill their own kind except under the spur of hunger. But, in other moods, he exhibits the strangest paradoxes. He

risers from the feet of Nature in  
protest against  
her teaching. In an arena of brutish  
struggling  
he holds up ideals of self-denial.  
kindliness. justice.  
and mercy : he gathers notions of Art  
from the  
world's kaleidoscopic exhibition of  
forms and  
colours: against Nature herself he  
appeals to  
supernatural forces which he seems  
dimly to  
descry through the darkness of her  
forests,